

REMARKS

Claims 12-17 were examined and rejected. Applicant amends claims 15 and 17 and asserts that no new matter is added herein as those amendments are supported by the Specification and figures as originally filed (e.g., see seed layer 160 of Figs. 3-6 and page 11 lines 2-21 to support amendments to claims 15 and 17). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of claims 12-17, as amended, in view of at least the following.

Applicant amends the Specification to claim the benefit of the earlier filing date of the parent application, U.S. Serial No. 09/163,847, filed September 30, 1998, and asserts that the amendment is timely as the current application can be amended at this time since it was filed prior to November 29, 2000.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. §112

The Patent Office rejects claims 15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, because the Specification and original claims do not include an embodiment wherein the seed layer is not over the surface of the circuit device. Applicant does not agree with this point, however, the issue is moot as Applicant has amended claims 15 and 17 to require that the seed layer does not completely cover the surface of the circuit device. For example, without limitation thereto, Figs. 3-6 and page 11 lines 2-21 of Applicant's specification show seed layer 160 over the surface of circuit device 110, which is directly contacted by conductive material 170 at the bottom of via 140. Hence, for at least this reason, Applicant respectfully requests the Patent Office withdraw the rejection above.

II. Claims Rejected Under 35. U.S.C. §102

The Patent Office rejects claims 12-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,277,249 issued to Gopalraja, et al. ("Gopalraja"). It is axiomatic that to be anticipated every limitation of a claim must be disclosed in a single reference.

Applicant respectfully asserts that Gopalraja is not a proper reference as Gopalraja does not predate the priority date of the current Application, as amended herein. Specifically, Applicant has amended the first paragraph of the current Application to claim priority from its parent application, Serial No. 09/163,847, filed September 30, 1998. Thus, the priority date for the current Application predates the priority date of Gopalraja. Hence, Applicant respectfully requests the Patent Office to withdraw the rejection above.

CONCLUSION

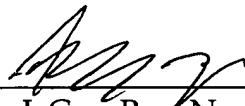
In sum, a good faith attempt has been made to explain why the rejection of the claims is improper, and how the claims are believed to be in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance referring to claims 12-17, as amended here, is therefore respectfully requested to issue at the earliest possible date.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2666 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17, particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BLAKELY, SOKOLOFF, TAYLOR & ZAFMAN LLP

Date: June 15, 2006.

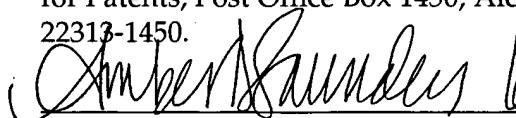


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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Post Office Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.



Amber D. Saunders 6/15/06
Date